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PARTY ON THE WAY TO A PICNIC IN THE BUSH.

FRANK LAYTON: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

CHAPTER LIII.

PREPARATIONS FOR A PICNIC.—A CANTER INTO THE BUSH.

A FEW days after the occurrences noted in our last chapter, an array of horses—three of them No. 128, 1854.

accounted with side-saddles—one of these being Mercy Matson's sleek and nimble-footed little Fairy—might have been seen tethered to the railings which separated the trim lawn of Mr. Bracy's residence from the adjoining meadow.

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land. Three other of the animals wore ordinary saddles, and across the back of a seventh were slung and fastened a pair of moderately-sized baskets, indicating a supply of provisions for a party bound on a distant excursion—probably one of pleasure.

Proceedings in the breakfast-room at Hunter's Creek would have confirmed the conjecture. The ladies of the party were already attired for the journey; and their attendants were discussing the route they were to take, concerning which reference was made to Dick Brown, as umpire and guide.

"Dick knows every step of the way better than I can pretend to describe it," said Mr. Bracy: "don't be afraid to trust yourself in his hands, my pretty one."

"Oh, sir, I am not afraid," replied Mercy Matson, to whom the encouragement and flattering designation were addressed; "nevertheless, if you would alter your mind, and go with us——"

"I might prove a mar-sport perhaps. You remember the old song, Miss Matson:—

'Crabbed age and youth cannot yoke together;  
Youth is full of pleasure; Age is full of care.'

"You are not to believe that of Reginald Bracy, though," interposed his wife. "Perhaps he will tell you next, that he never had any taste for pleasure-taking and sight-seeing."

"Or water-excursions," added Frances Bracy, with a mischievous smile of intelligence. "Papa has been too communicative by half to make us believe that."

"We have had other water-excursions since then, Fanny," responded her father; and the smile gave place to a slight conscious blush. The "then" was understood to refer to some interesting passage in Mr. Bracy's past history; and our readers will recollect that Challoner Matson's friendship with the family at Hunter's Creek in general, and with Frances Bracy in particular, dated from the evening of the perilous escape from the flood.

"I may understand, then, that you will give orders for your horse to be saddled, sir," said Mercy, coaxingly; and she was seconded in her request by her brother, who observed that, having prompted the excursion by his eloquent description of the scenery to be enjoyed, Mr. Bracy could scarcely refuse to do honour to it as leader of the party.

"I must refuse, however; for, in the absence of your friend Layton, I shall have to turn my horse's head ten miles in the opposite direction."

"And what," remonstrated Challoner's sister, playfully, "if I should turn sulky at last, and refuse to mount little Fairy, and call you a false knight for being so obdurate?"

"A very wild supposition, my dear," said Mr. Bracy gravely; "but in that case I must submit to your frown."

"Or should confess to being timid?"

"At the thought of a summer day's canter of a dozen or two miles through the bush, with Dick for a guide, and two such protectors as Irving and your brother!"

"To feeling solitary, then? For Mr. Irving must take care of his wife, you know; and

Challoner will watch every movement of Fanny's bridle-hand."

"You shall have Dick Brown all to yourself, Mercy," said her brother gaily.

"Dick Brown will have the sumpter horse to take care of," the young lady objected. "But never mind: there is very good sense in Dick; and if it comes to the worst I can talk to Fairy; so I suppose I must submit."

A few more words passed, and then, with slight ceremony, the ladies were mounted; and in a few minutes the party was sweeping gently over the rising ground towards the head of the valley.

In the flattest and tamest tract of country the wayfarer is occasionally surprised and delighted by unexpectedly falling in with secluded spots of quiet loveliness, if not of wild magnificence. This is particularly the case where nature has been unmolested and unsubdued by man's hand—has been neither trimmed, pruned, nor metamorphosed by his utilitarian devices. The country in which our scenes have been laid is neither flat, tame, nor uninteresting; but, widely diversified as it is in its general features, there are some detached landscapes which peculiarly attract the traveller's notice, and over which he feels disposed to linger with varied emotions:—here, with awe, at the almost terrific sublimity of the scene; and elsewhere, with softened feelings, as though he were introduced to the outskirts of man's lost paradise.

On such a spot Mr. Bracy, in company with his overseer and his young native attendant, had some time before lighted, while exploring in the bush of his own broad and imperfectly surveyed estate; and his description of the scene had led to the present excursion.

The route taken by the party was for some distance nearly parallel with the road which we have already passed over in company with little Joe, in his nocturnal ride to the farm of the gambling partners. But instead of following the course of the valleys, the guide led the way over the adjoining hills, and pushed boldly through the primeval forest which covered their broken and irregular sides and crowned their tops.

The day was very lovely. The heat of the summer sun was tempered by a cool southerly breeze, and the pure light blue of the cloudless sky qualified and brightened the brown foliage to which it formed the background.

For several miles the course of the pleasure party lay along the irregular crests of the hills, and amidst stately gums, at once the most common and the most magnificent of Australia's forest trees. There was enough of animal existence around them to give liveliness to the scene, and to furnish subject for frequent exclamation, if not for continuous conversation. Now it was a flock of parrots, with their brilliant plumage of gold and green, passing overhead, and filling the air with their harsh and inharmonious cries: then, a shy bandicoot crossed their path, and was seen skurrying into its hole: at other instants, the song of the blue wren, or the peculiar call of the lyre-bird, attracted the attention and invited the search of the explorers; and again, the nimble feats of the flying squirrel on the huge limbs or slender branches of the forest, demanded their admiration. An opossum, gravely and sleepily

surveying the travellers from its stronghold in the hollow of a tree, far beyond reach; the deep full voice of the bell-bird; the shrill whistle of the coachman; and the solemn chant, alternated with the uproarious cachinnation of the laughing jack-ass: though none of these sights and sounds were absolutely unfamiliar to the bushmen and women of our party, they were sufficiently novel and exciting to give additional zest to their excursion.

We are not sure even that the occasional rustle of a snake in the dry leaves underfoot, or the vision of a black animal of this species gliding past in alarm, detracted much from the enjoyment of the day's pleasure. A slight flavouring of danger—its appearance without its near approach—sometimes, at least, gives piquancy to what might otherwise appear to be the tame adventures of life.

## CHAPTER LIV.

## THE VALLEY OF FLOWERS, AND THE KING OF THE FOREST.

THE plain or table-land upon which our party of pleasure-seekers now entered, was impressive from its barrenness and loneliness. But for the presence of grass trees scattered over the plain—theyself an unflinching indication of poverty of soil—it would have seemed as though all vegetable life was in that quarter extinct. Some of these plants were, for the species, of extraordinary size and height. From a single rough stem, nearly a foot in diameter, rising from the ground above the heads of our riders, spread a large cluster of fibrous foliage, bearing some distant resemblance to the eastern palm tree, though possessing none of its generous qualities; and from the centre of this foliage arose a flower-stem like a tall straight spear, terminating in its dull and unprofitable flower. Others, in an earlier stage of vegetative existence, presented thick stemless bosses of long, curving, grass-like leaves, forming frequent stumbling-blocks to incautious riders, and offering in compensation but small nutriment to their beasts.

The ground beneath the horses' feet was dry and rocky; and the sun, approaching its meridian, struck oppressively on the heads of the travellers, while nothing like a termination to the pathless and inhospitable waste was for some time visible.

"You are sure that you are leading us right?" said Mercy, as with a motion of her hand she guided her pony to the side of Dick Brown.

"Certain," he promptly replied.

"It is a dreary prospect," exclaimed Eleanor: "the fine place that father speaks of should be very beautiful to pay us for the trouble of reaching it. Don't you think so, Mercy?"

"I don't think this is so very shocking a spot, dear Eleanor: I am rather enjoying the canter over this rough ground, so long as we are in no danger of losing ourselves. It puts me something in mind of our own prairies in the far west, which Challoner sometimes tells us about."

"Not so extensive, I should hope, though," said the young American; "or we are running the risk of camping out more nights than one, or ten, or twenty, before we reach the farther boundary."

"Well, we can turn back—there is some comfort in that," rejoined the young lady by his side; and, suiting the action to her words, Frances Bracy turned her face towards the point at which they

had entered the plain, to find that the forest had vanished from view, and that all around was the same dreary and monotonous desert. She uttered a faint exclamation of surprise, not perhaps unmingled with alarm, as the remembrance of Archie's fate crossed her mind. "I hope and trust," she whispered to Challoner, "that Dick is not confusing himself and misleading us. Ask him, dear Challoner."

"There really is no fear of that, Fanny; if there were no other guide, the sun would be sufficient in this case; but I will do your bidding." And, trotting forward his horse, he put the question which had already been asked, but in another form:—

"You have often passed over this plain, Dick?"

"Only once, Mr. Matson; the time that Mr. Braey spoke of."

"And you really think that you are right in the direction you are taking?"

"Not think, sir: I am sure."

"I have no doubt you are right; but we have been some time in the saddle, and the ladies are weary; don't you think we had better rest, and see what your baskets contain?"

"If you please, Mr. Matson; but this is not a nice place to rest: the sun is too hot, and there is no shade. A little while more, and we shall come to a better place."

"What do you say, Mercy?" asked Challoner of his sister, who was trotting by his side.

"That I have faith in Dick, and intend to follow his directions;" and as the party pressed on, a smile of thanks from the guide's swarthy face rewarded the young speaker's kindness.

The desert was not interminable, and the young native's accuracy was soon vindicated: first by the appearance in the horizon of a few low shrubs, which indicated an approach to a more kindly soil; and then by the rising into view, as the ground trended gradually downwards, of a distant range of wooded heights, where lay imbedded the spot towards which the wanderings of the party were directed.

As they descended into the intervening valley, the scene was strangely altered. Around them, the mountain-side was thickly covered with tangled bush, through which there was occasionally some difficulty in finding a passage. Here, the dwarf honeysuckle abounded, and tempted the travellers with the luscious drops of transparent honey which sparkled from every flower; while here and there a tall tree, rising high above the surrounding scrub, was encircled with climbing plants bearing numerous clusters of flowers, some of the richest crimson, and others of delicate blue and purple. We cannot use the word *road*, when road and path there was none; but the course instinctively pursued by the guide was in some parts precipitately steep; and the travellers, on emerging from the bush, rejoiced in the prospect spread before them, of a pleasant valley covered with tall oat grass, which waved in the breeze and tempted the horses with its succulent and nutritious qualities. Sheltered in some measure from the sun's extreme heat by a thicket of scrub, the party halted, and permitted their horses to graze, while they applied themselves to the refreshments with which they were provided.



A short half hour passed away, and the explorers were again mounted and cheerily galloping across the valley. Then, entering a narrow gorge in the range of hills on the opposite side, they passed onwards and slightly upwards between steep banks covered with low bush, until a scene broke upon their view which called forth exclamations of delight and admiration. A lovely upland plain, nearly encircled with hills, was spread before them. Some of these hills rose hundreds of feet above the plain in enormous masses of overhanging crags and cliffs, bare and of dazzling whiteness; while others sloped gently upwards, and were covered with thick and vigorous vegetation—magnificent trees, rising in tier above tier, till the distant mountain ridge was gained. From the heights of one of the more precipitous hills, a waterfall of considerable volume sprang forward and dashed downward, now sparkling and shining like molten silver in the narrow bed which it had formed by constant attrition in the solid rock; now disappearing between lofty and stubborn crags; then gleaming in the sunshine, as, winding round the obstacle too mighty to be overcome, the mountain stream was seen bounding downwards in another direction, till at length its full body was projected over a ledge of polished rock, and with a ceaseless roar supplied a lake of magnificent dimensions and surpassing beauty.

The plain was richly wooded, yet not in tame uniformity. In some places were detached groups of wattle trees, covered with their beautiful yellow flowers, and picturesque she-oaks, with slender trailing branches and silky filamental foliage; in others, majestic gum trees rose singly, towering high above their fellows. Long and broad vistas, stretching onwards through the valley, seemed as though planned by the art of a Paxton, to produce the effect of boundless extent and rich variety of light and shade; while elsewhere, narrow glades penetrated into the depth of the forest, till lost in gloom. Hundreds of acres of rich alluvial land were treeless, and decked in the gayest hues of the Australian flora. Such were some of the accessories of the scene over which the delighted eyes of our excursionists wandered, as they slowly urged forward their horses through the thick vegetation beneath their feet, while they discovered new sources of admiration at every step.

Half an hour's further gentle progress brought them to the borders of the lake, a clear and sparkling reservoir. Cedars, springing from thickets of ferns and reeds of enormous magnitude, were flourishing on its banks, and reaching to the water's edge. Flocks of water-fowl rose slowly on the wing at the sound of their voices, wheeled lazily round, and dropped again on the surface of the lake at a short distance only from the shore. The presence of man was evidently strange to them in this, their native haunt, and they had not learned to fear him.

The effects produced upon the minds of our wanderers by the beauties which surrounded them were characteristic. Irving, who was a keen sportsman, regretted that he had left behind him his gun. His young wife and her sister found relief to their feelings by enthusiastic expressions of delight as new objects presented themselves to

notice. Challoner Matson, while partaking of the pleasure derivable by them all from the contemplation of nature in some of its most attractive forms, mixed with it a spice of his national spirit of calculation. A rich and productive soil was running to waste; and a magnificent site for a settlement was unoccupied. How long would it be before the quiet and solitary valley would be turned up by the plough, or become the grazing-ground of flocks and herds? Where would the farm be built? and what were the facilities for communication with the settled districts? His sister, on the other hand, smiled at Challoner's speculations, and declared her contentment that here and there, on the earth's broad surface, such spots should remain solitary. "Let us," she said, "have something left to remind us of what the world might have been if sin had not marred its beauty."

"We don't know what the world might have been, dear Mercy," said Challoner; "but we know what it will be when the designs of our Heavenly Father are accomplished—when the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them that are truly his, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

But whatever idiosyncrasies were observable in the individuals of the party, there was one subject on which there was considerable unanimity of feeling. They had started some hours before, intent on a day's pleasurable enjoyment, as well as on a tour of discovery; and they were reminded that the time had arrived for rest and refreshment. They remembered also that one remarkable object of which Mr. Bracy had informed them remained undiscovered; and Dick Brown was once more in request as a guide.

Led on by him, they silently left the banks of the lake, and, tramping down the high grass and taller flowers of the valley, entered one of the avenues of which we have spoken, and found relief from the sun's unbroken rays beneath the partial shade of graceful wattle trees, till they found themselves ascending an irregularly shaped hill, clothed, like the valley they had left, with a profusion of grasses and flowers. Arriving at a broad natural platform near to its summit, they stopped and turned their eyes to the plain below, which lay in all its placid beauty of lake, and dazzling cliffs, and patches of forest, and broad expanse of flowering sward.

"And here is the giant king of the forest, of which Mr. Bracy told us!" exclaimed Mercy, urging forward her pony to the knotty root of a majestic tree, the trunk and limbs and spreading branches of which were so colossal in proportion as to throw into comparative insignificance the surrounding forest, and to merit the title it had received.

#### CHAPTER LV.

##### THE SUDDEN AND FEARFUL BREAKING UP OF A PLEASURE PARTY.

In a short time the wanderers had dismounted, and, having secured their horses from straying, were seated at the foot of the princely gum tree, the enormous trunk of which rose a hundred feet or more limbless, and then threw out its wide canopy of spreading branches, overshadowing a broad area of ground below.

"Confess now, Challoner," said Frances Bracy, as they lingered over the temperate meal with which their provision baskets had been stored; "confess, Mercy, that in all your boasted States, you have never met with a scene superior in loveliness to this."

"You would not make us recreant to our own dear country, my little Australian," her companion answered, with a smile. "But without venturing upon comparisons, I can afford to admire, to your heart's content, all that is admirable to you, here or elsewhere, in this broad land. Will that content you?"

"I suppose it must; though it is not saying much, after all. You speak with a reserve, too: tell me what there is to find fault with in this glorious prospect."

"Nothing, dear Frances: it is glorious; and yet, if you must have comparisons, I might say that I sometimes want the fresh and vivid green of our spring foliage and meadows. Even here, with all its beauty and variety, that feature seems to me wanting to make the scene perfect. The dark and glossy uniformity, and unchanging aspect—"

"You are incorrigible, I see," exclaimed the young lady, interrupting him; "you will tell me next that it is a pleasant thing to see every living tree stripped of its leaves through a third part of the year, like a dead and worthless thing. Our trees die only once—yours in America, like those of England and Scotland, as they tell me, die every year."

"Nay, my fair sister," interposed Mr. Irving, entering playfully into the discussion, "not die, they only sleep; and we can boast of evergreens, that are evergreens, some of them. Ours here, would be better called everbrowns."

"Irving is worse than Mr. Matson," said Eleanor. "Would you believe that he has tried to persuade me to fall in love with his description of a Scottish winter?—all snow and ice, or wet and mist and drizzle. It made me shiver to hear him talk about it."

"And is it not grand and beautiful," her husband asked, "to see the brave old mountains with their winter caps on; and the broad lakes and mountain streams struggling against old king frost; and then, to watch the first buddings of spring, and to scent it in every breeze?"

"Well, we poor natives of this poor country must be content with iceless ponds, greenless trees, and scentless flowers," said Frances Bracy, cheerfully. "But you, I suppose," she added, turning to Challoner's sister, "join the disaffected, and sigh for 'auld lang syne?'"

"It is scarcely worth while to sigh for that," Mercy replied; "if I were to leave Australia to-morrow, I should have reason to sigh for the pleasant country and the kind friends left behind. I don't wish to live elsewhere," she added: "but for all that, I shall never be able to look on the most beautiful scenery of this country, any more than I could of our own, with unmingled satisfaction."

"Mercy does not believe in our right—the white and civilized man's—to dispossess the poor natives of their forests and broad hunting-grounds," said Challoner, softly, and glancing at Dick Brown, who, at some little distance from the party, was leaning

over the back of little Fairy, and fondly smoothing down its mane, while he looked, pensively it seemed to be, over the valley beneath.

"I have settled that with my conscience long since," said Mr. Irving; "though I must say that I think better of the poor black fellows than I used to do. Still, it is ridiculous and unreasonable to suppose that a country like this now, or like America, ought to have been left in the sole possession of some few thousands, or hundreds of thousands say, of savages who never would have used it in the way God intended it to be used, when there are millions in the world wanting elbow-room. You cannot think that, Miss Matson?"

"I am not skilful enough to argue on the subject, sir," said Mercy; "I only regret that wherever our white race has gained a footing, it has been a war of extermination—the strong against the feeble; and that the poor natives, when not destroyed, have been driven from their cherished possessions, and unrelentingly left to pine in unhealthy backwoods or dreary and inhospitable deserts. I regret still more, that religion and civilization have not gone hand in hand, and that efforts have not been made to bring back the wanderers to God and heaven."

"A hopeless task, I am afraid, my little philanthropist," said Irving. "I grant that here and there one, like our friend Dick yonder, when taken in hand early as he was, may rise above the level of his fellow savages in intelligence, and may even become a Christian; but as to the mass of them—why, think of their disgusting habits, and look at their degraded forms, their brutal countenances, their low, retreating foreheads."

"And looking at and thinking of all this," said Challoner, quietly taking up the argument, "I not only believe, but am sure, that my sister is right. The aboriginal natives of this country are undoubtedly sunk low in the scale of humanity; but not so low as to be beyond the influence of divine grace and the power of God's good Spirit."

"I do not dispute that," said Irving, thoughtfully; "but facts unhappily go to prove that the means that have been used have not been very effectual in removing their vice and ignorance."

"I am not quite convinced of that, Mr. Irving," responded the young American; "at any rate I was witness, not long ago—when I took that journey into the other colony—to a scene which made me, as a man, ashamed of some of my prejudices, and caused me, as a Christian man, to thank God and take courage."

"And what was that?" asked Irving.

"I spent one Lord's day," said Challoner, "at the farm of an old settler, of whom I had heard various and contradictory reports, and concerning which I wanted to judge for myself. His neighbours, who, however, lived a good way off, looked upon him as a singular and whimsical man, and were not sure that he was quite right in the upper story, as they said. Well, I arrived at the farm on Saturday, and was cordially welcomed, of course. There was nothing that I could discover remarkable in the farmer, except that he was particularly sensible in his conversation, and, as I soon discovered, a warm-hearted and energetic Christian. But his eccentricity lay particularly in this:

he had strong feelings of sympathy with and benevolence towards the aboriginal natives. Instead of scouting their society, and driving them from his comparatively small estate, he had gathered them around him, trusted himself in their hands, and employed them on his farm as shepherds and workmen, to the exclusion of men of his own complexion. It was this that had given rise to the reports I had heard. The men were well paid, and worked well, he told me; and I should judge so from what I observed. He said, moreover, that they were faithful and intelligent. There was certainly no appearance of stupidity in their countenances, nor of the disgusting filthiness in their persons which is commonly attributed to the whole race. They had comfortable huts, and were decently clothed, as were their wives and children. But this is not all. On the morning after my arrival, I was invited by my host to attend public worship in the hall of his farm; and there I found myself in the company of a group of worshippers, all, except our two selves, with my friend's wife and children, the dark-skinned and despised natives of the country. They sang the praises of their God and Saviour in soft and musical tones; their eyes glistened with tears when they heard of the love of Jesus; they knelt in prayer at the footstool of Him who has 'made of one blood all nations of men.' It was a melting and reviving, and yet a depressing sight."

"It must have been good to be there," said Mercy. "And did your friend say how he had succeeded in winning the attention of these poor creatures to the gospel?"

"By the simplest and yet the most efficacious means, dear sister: by strong faith and fervent prayer; by patience and perseverance; by consistency and kindness; and by simply telling the tale of God's love, of a Saviour's sufferings and death, the object of his mission, and his intercession above."

The conversation had proceeded thus far when it was interrupted by a cry of alarm and terror from Dick Brown, who, the next instant, sprang to the trunk of a tall tree, and, by the help of the climbing plants which encircled it, quickly gained its lower limbs, and was lost for a few moments in its scanty foliage, till he reappeared among the topmost branches, and was seen gazing intently towards that quarter of the sky behind the hill on the side of which they were seated. Turning themselves in that direction, the startled party noticed a thick filmy cloud of singular character, rising above the hill top, and rapidly shifting its position. At times it almost disappeared, then again it enlarged and thickened: now it was white and billowy, and the next moment dark and lurid. It gradually increased in volume, however, and was accompanied by a faint continuous sound like that of distant thunder. Meanwhile the sun, in the opposite quarter of the sky, was shining in placid cloudlessness, and the valley lay below them bathed in its glowing rays.

"What does it mean?" whispered Eleanor, slightly paling as she looked into her husband's discomposed countenance, and clinging to his arm.

"Nothing, nothing I hope. But that is too

much to say. I pray God my fears be not true," he added, with some agitation. "But if they are, remember you are a true bush-woman, Eleanor; and think how much will depend on your coolness and presence of mind."

"But what is it?" demanded the young wife again, as the sound increased, and the cloud arose in thicker darkness, while she alternately gazed from that to her husband's face.

At the same instant that Dick was hastily descending from the tree, two horsemen were seen galloping over the brow of the hill. At first they were evidently unaware of the proximity of the party; and when, at the distance of two or three hundred yards, the discovery was made, one of the strangers was observed to check his horse and throw up his hand as in astonishment. In another moment his voice was heard, clear and strong, and its import sunk like a death-deck into the hearts of the anxious listeners—

"To your horses—your horses!—THE BUSH IS ON FIRE."

Then, spurring on again with headlong haste, followed by his companion, he threw himself from the saddle beneath the giant tree; and when the sudden revulsion which the fearful perception of the imminent danger had for a moment produced in her mind had settled down into renewed confidence and womanly resolution, Mercy Matson, to her surprise, found Frank Layton by her side.

#### BLOTS ON BRITAIN'S ESCUTCHEON.

THE terrible war upon which we have entered, and of which we have just had a faint foretaste, has, as in times remembered now but by few of this generation, roused the attention of the pulpits of our land. Among the numerous discourses which have been delivered, some few, marked, it has perhaps been thought, by some unusual claims upon public attention, have been published. Of these "burdens of the Lord" there is one at least which deserves to be heard far beyond the precincts of the congregation to whom it was addressed, abounding as it does in pungent appeals, forcible representations, and eloquent exhortations. We refer to the pamphlet entitled, "The War, in some of its Social, Political, and Religious Aspects," by Dr. T. Guthrie—a gentleman well known for his able advocacy of ragged schools and other benevolent movements. The following passages, in which the preacher dwells upon the fact of our own guiltiness as a people, in relation to schemes of aggression and wars of conquest, will justify the terms in which we have spoken of the work:—

"In one of the libraries of the New World there is a bible which no man can read; it is a translation, by Elliot, into the tongue of a tribe of which no living man survives. In sad keeping with this fact, Humboldt mentions another; he tells how the Indians, as they shot down the river, looked up with awe to an old parrot, that, perched on the branch of a withered tree, talked to the melancholy woods some words of a language, the tongue of a once powerful tribe—every man, woman, and sucking child of it, all dead and gone, destroyed, exterminated on their own soil by fire



or sword, or Europe's imported vices. That bible which no eye can read; that old bird perched on the forest tree, the last speaker of a once living tongue; these two incidents—most touching incidents—remind us, that whatever charge of guilt in conquest or invasion we bring against the man with whom we are at war, recoils upon ourselves. How was it that we, who, looking on the map of the world, occupy a small island on its northern edge, acquired these immense possessions that, in every clime, scattered over every sea, and found in every continent, own the sway of Britain? What is the history of these colonies? How did so small an island swell into so big a kingdom that, as is truly said, the sun never sets on our queen's dominions? Alas! these hands are not clean. We cannot hold them up in the face of day, and say, they 'are pure from the blood of all men.' Clean! they are stained, foully stained, with the guilt of conquest and invasion; and Britain, protesting, and righteously protesting, against the ambition of this northern despot, stands herself open to the taunt, 'Physician, heal thyself;' 'Thou hypocrite, cast the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.' Uninvited, unwelcome, resisted—resisted to the very death—we carried these colonies by the edge of the sword; and no man can read their history, the sad and melancholy history of some, at least, of these rich possessions, without feeling the justice of Fowell Buxton's remark, when, standing on the floor of the British parliament, he denounced the crimes which his country had committed against pagan nations, declaring, in tones of righteous indignation, that the unhappiest day for them was that which first brought Christians to their shore. Do we complain of Russian invasion? Why, we have been the greatest invaders Time ever saw. Planting one foot on America, and another on Asia, we have bestrode the world like a Colossus, and have carried war to many more peaceful shores than ever did ambitious Rome. Our title-deeds to these lands have been written in the tears of humanity, and carved deep by the sword on the memory of helpless tribes; and now we need not wonder that, in a righteous providence, God should whip us with the scourge beneath which we have made our brother's back to bleed. Were these shores of ours invaded—had we to fight for hearths and homes—had we, with wife, daughter, children, cowering at our back, to stand in our doorway and do battle with ruthless ruffians—were we driven at length to those hills where our fathers fought freedom's fight with the legions of Rome—had our children to stand like theirs, the white slaves of some distant market—then there would be meted out to us the measure we have meted to others.

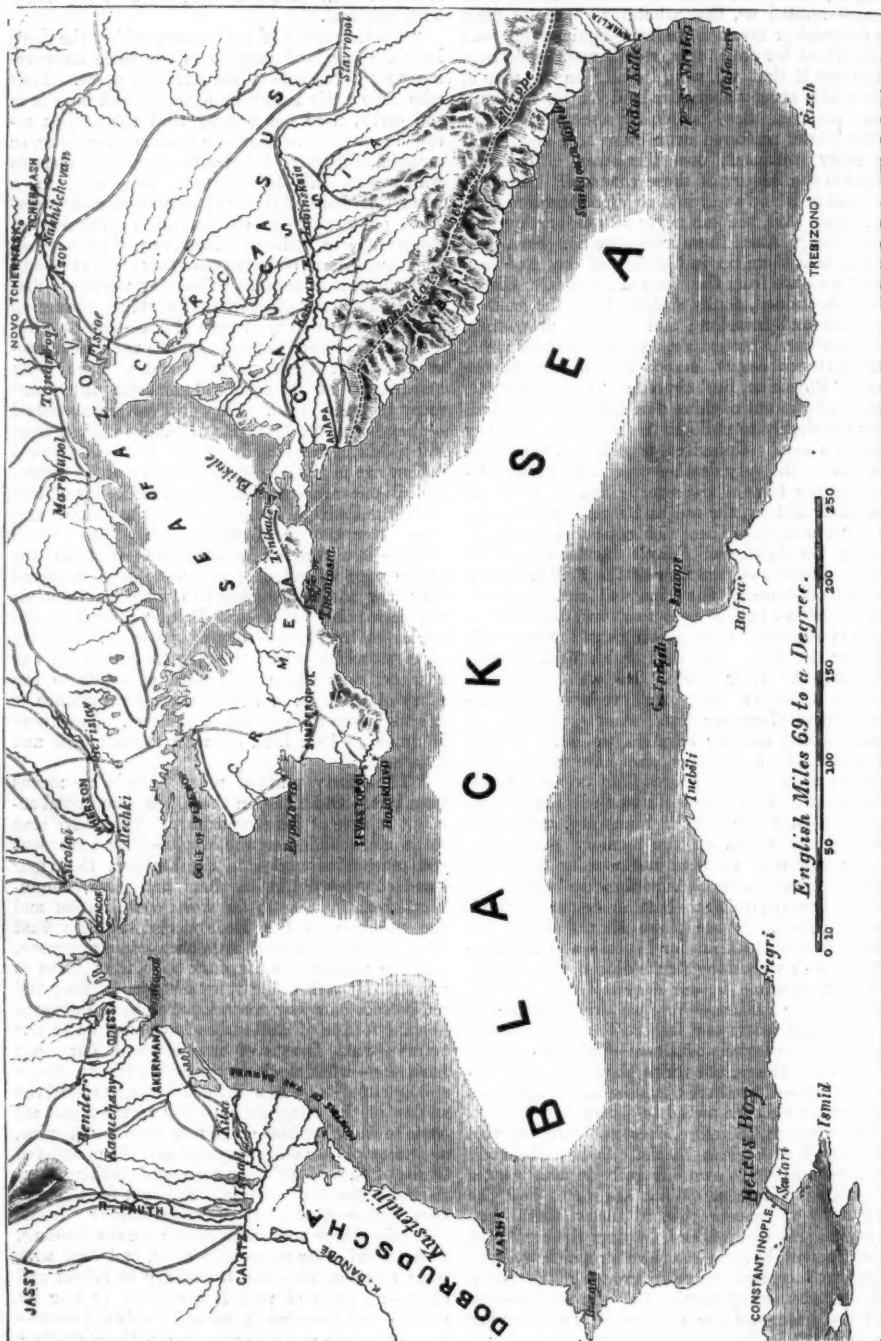
"Our nation, therefore, does not enter on this controversy with clean hands. It is well to feel that, and humbly to own our guilt in this matter before God and man. What are we to do? To fling away these countries, to throw them back on rapine and discord, and leaving them without a government, to complete the ruin which we have begun, and aggravate former wrongs? Certainly not. The best compensation they can receive—the best restitution we can render—is, while owning the guilt of our fathers in this matter, to sow with

a more open hand the seeds of civilization in the soils which our arms have subdued, and bless their inhabitants with the gospel of peace. We have taken of their carnal things; let us repay them with spiritual.

"Another cause of controversy which the Lord has with our land, may lie in the little improvement we have made of the late long peace. They who hide their talent in a napkin and bury it in the earth, need not wonder that the gift is recalled; or that, be they of a personal, domestic, or national character, God should resume the mercies which man fails to improve. No doubt, in a more full share of civil privileges—in vast accessions of wealth—in an enormous extension of commerce—in brilliant discoveries of science—in the inventions and improvements of art—and better still than these, in the more universal distribution among all, even the humblest classes, of the comforts and enjoyments of life—our country, during these forty years, has made unrivalled progress. And these years, besides, have been marked by events that will embalm their memory to latest ages. They saw slavery abolished—they heard the trumpets of jubilee echoed from hill to hill in the islands of the west—they saw a nation rise in the might and majesty of its virtue, and, in one ever-memorable day, strike his fetters from the limbs of every slave in the British empire. Nor can we of this section of the church forget—it will never be forgotten—it is written in the page of indelible story—that in Scotland they saw a sacrifice offered to religious principle not less noble than that Britain offered at the shrine of humanity—they witnessed in this city an event which turned the eyes of Europe on our country, and which redounded as much to the glory of God, as, in his overruling providence, it has furthered the interest of religion. Yes, there is much to look back on with thankfulness and satisfaction.

"These forty years of peace have by no means been lost. Old Time, in these, has some good account to give of his stewardship. They have sent forth more bibles on the world—they have sent out more missionaries to the heathen, than four hundred years did before them, and thus communicated an impulse to the world's civilization and the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom that shall be felt when long ages have come and gone. But the picture has its dark side too. Turn it round. How this side reproaches us! They tell us, indeed, how our manufactures have increased—what forests of mill-stalks have shot up in our towns—what forests of masts crowd our busy harbours—what machinery rolls and labours in our smoky cities—and how Britain, having pressed the spirits of the elements into her service, and set them to work her iron arms, now weaves and spins, and accomplishes a task as great as if the unassisted hands of this globe's one thousand millions were toiling in her daily service. So much for the manufactories—what of the manufacturers? Inside that mill, where one grows dizzy with the flashing, flying whirl of its thousand wheels, and deaf with their ceaseless din, the machinery is bright and clean—no stain of rust is permitted to mar its polish; and these iron arms and hands of labour—it is a pleasure and a wonder to see them at their

## MAP OF THE SEAT OF WAR IN THE EAST.





work; but look at the men, the women, the little children—the best part of the machinery—the living machinery! Stand by the door of some of these busy hives when the bell rings, and the hour of rest sends forth the workers to their hurried meal—follow them to their homes—to these dense, crowded, unhealthy neighbourhoods—and, alas! into what low and foul, and godless and graceless habits have these children of toil been allowed to sink!

"They tell us, also, how our cities have grown—increased in wealth, in luxury, in population. They have grown in another direction, in such a way, alas! as to illustrate the scripture—'Thou hast multiplied the nation, but not increased the joy.' These lapsed, lost, neglected, degraded, most unpitied and uncared-for masses, have so grown beyond the means both of education and of grace, that now, as appears by the late government census, in the capital of our empire (it is to be hoped that the extremities are in a sounder state than the heart) more than half the inhabitants have cast off the very profession of religion, and from year's end to year's end never darken the door of a house of God. And, to come nearer home—to take another census—to recall that of last year, think of the many thousand visits paid in a single Sabbath-day to the drinking shops of this city. Like sailors in a storm, who quarrel about mending some hole in a sail when the ship is on her beam ends, we have contended about minor matters, and even now are contending about theories of education, while 'my people,' says God, 'are destroyed for lack of knowledge.' Thousands starve while we settle the shape and stamp of the loaf. The swelling flood of drunkenness rises on our schools and churches. We talk of national foes, and fortify our shores against distant dangers; but what sin curses, what danger threatens, this nation like intemperance? Intemperance costs our country more money annually than the whole British revenue, and more misery, more tears, more broken hearts, more loss of life than we should suffer by fighting four Waterloos each year. Had these forty years of peace been but forty years of war—earnest, active war—against domestic enemies, ignorance, intemperance, immorality and irreligion—had the country buckled for that fight as now she does for this—she had grown better laurels in these years of peace than any she shall win in the field of war. To gather in ten thousand outcasts, to convert them into decent citizens, pillars of the state, and ornaments of the church of Christ, were every way a nobler thing than to leave ten thousand dead on the field, or whelmed in the grave of the sea; and while we carry on the battle against our foreign enemies, it were more fatal than the most disastrous defeat to neglect the better war at home. In this home-field, our noblest, our holiest, most enduring triumphs are to be won. Even 'he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city.' 'They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.' There are no victories like those of knowledge over ignorance, of virtue over vice, of piety over irreligion; in these the conquered are more blessed than the conqueror; conquered and conquerors alike divide the spoil."

### THE TZAR'S SUMMER QUARTERS.

"WHERE are you going?" asks some familiar, as, on a fiery July day, you hurry, red in the face, along the splendid quays of the Neva. But you have no time to explain. Already the steamer's bell has rung. So, throwing an hour's politeness into your glance, you push past, leaving the word "Peterhoff" floating in the air behind you, as a sufficient explanation of your excitement. A minute or two brings you to the landing, where the intimation, "For Peterhoff," is written in Russ, German, and English. You get into the office. Others are there before you, and during the few seconds of detention you have time to look round, and see that the shelves behind the counter are filled with the caps and swords of officers who, in their trips, leave them till they call again. The place looks like a room in an army clothier's. But it is your turn now, and the man looks. If you seem *very* shabby, he gives you a steerage ticket, and consigns you to the fellowship of the *moujiks*. But if you seem at all reputable, he hands you a slip of pink paper, with some wonderful characters on it, and you hand him fifty copecks, and proceed to the boat. You are now on the gangway. But here you are stopped by two old soldiers—civil, like all the Russians—who examine your *billet*, tear off a corner, and then motion you towards the cabin.

There are several Peterhoff steamers, and all pretty much alike. You find yourself in a long, sharp, elegant, fast-sailing iron river boat. The weather is fine. This is a *fête*-day. Crowds are going down. You came late. There is neither room to walk about nor sit down, so you must stand till some one leaves his place. Under these circumstances, you squeeze yourself, rather sheepishly, between rows of seated ladies, and get near the taffrail, where you are out of the way and can see everybody.

The bell now rings for the last time. The gangway is removed, the ropes are thrown off, the steamer backs, then goes ahead, then swings round. While this interesting operation is progressing, several people rush down to the quay, and stop abruptly within an inch of the edge, having discovered two or three minutes before that it was no use in their coming at all. But there they are, looking very indignant and ready to go home again every time a boat starts. You are now clear, and passing Baird's works on the left, and the Mine-corps on the right, the city disappears, and the vessel threads her way in the narrow channel which leads through the now shallow expanse towards the gulf of Finland.

Look at the passengers now, for there is no scenery worth noticing. All are fully occupied, the ladies with their tongues, and the gentlemen with their tobacco. But some of the fair sex in Russia do more than talk: they smoke too. At first you can hardly believe it, but are soon convinced that there is no mistake; for in one case you see that "the smoke which so gracefully curls" comes from under a handsome bonnet; in another, that small gloved hand holds an ignited *papirosse* in the most approved method; while a third lady asks a fellow traveller to give her a light. However, smoking ladies, though frequently met with,

are not the rule. On the other hand, all the men smoke, and the mass indulge in this habit to excess. Especially do they indulge in it on board the steamer, since they dare not draw a puff in the streets of any city, town, or village of the empire, because the czar abhors the practice, and won't allow it: a useful hint this to legislators among ourselves. Even in free America, users of tobacco are compelled, in such cities as Boston, to consume it in their pipes at home. Why should they annoy other people? And I can bear witness that they do so; for even on the deck of these Russian steamers, on a calm day, the air is so filled with stifling fumes, that to breathe freely one would almost need to be hung over the side.

This beclouded company is a motley one. Here is a knot of glittering uniforms; there is a group of grey military cloaks. Here is an elderly gentleman in plain clothes, with an "order" round his neck; there is a frivolous youth, who does not seem to be burdened with any kind of order at all. And as for languages: a running fire of French is pretty general, with here a little Russ, there a rasp of German, and in yon corner a monosyllable or two in English. It seems as if every country in Europe had sent a representative on board the vessel. Either sex, all ages, and professions, and ranks are huddled together in this iron box, thinking little of the day that is gone, less of that which is coming, and chiefly intent on the present moment. They are going to Peterhoff, partly to look at the crowd, and partly to let the crowd look at them. They are people who live chiefly for pleasure, and find it hard work to waste time.

The water at Peterhoff is shallow, so that the pier runs out a long way. The bank is pretty, and from amidst the green trees golden and glittering roofs peep out, now hinting at a palace, and now at a holy *sabor*. Some distance from the end of the pier is the place where private carriages draw up. A little further on is the drosky stand, where a mounted *gend'arme* is stationed to keep the *isvoetchiks* in order; for there, as here, "cabby" is an unruly mortal. Indeed, the drivers are the only men in Russia to whom uproarious action and freedom of speech is permitted. Nor are they slow to use their privilege. There they are, with their low-crowned hats, dirty faces, shaggy beards, and long *caftans*, shouting vociferously, running frantically up to, round about, and after passengers. You see what you may expect. Go, then, and face the tumult. *Gospadeen, pajalsty! Gospadeen, pajalsty!* issues from twenty hairy mouths, and every speaker demands that you deposit yourself in his particular vehicle at that very moment. But as ubiquity is impossible, and dismemberment unpleasant, you must at once jump into the decenter looking concern you see, and instantly drive off, which you do, accompanied by a volley of jokes and jeers.

Peterhoff was a favourite place with the great czar whose name it bears. Two of his palaces are still standing; but these look so humble, that a visitor would never fancy they had held an emperor unless he were told that they really did so. One is a white painted, square, two-storied building, in size and shape just like that which a retired citizen, such as John Gilpin, might have built for himself at Ware, in Cowper's time. It stands

embosomed in woods, and has a large square pond before it, where quantities of fish swim, as fat and as tame as those at Hampton Court. The other is a one-story range, close to the river, with a marble terrace before it, and a pretty garden on the land side; but withal, it is a poor place.

At a more recent and advanced period in Russian history, the lavish and unprincipled Catherine erected a more pretentious building on the top of the hill which rises to the south, and on which the village stands. Now this woman was a great admirer of Voltaire, and loved to think herself, and would have others think her, quite a philosopher. She was wise, too, in her generation, conducted great affairs, and gathered able men about her. Hence, one wonders that she did not build a better palace, for this is a very tawdry affair, loaded with stucco ornaments overlaid with gilding.

This building, then, is the official residence of the czar Nicholas, during four or five months every summer. In this palace he receives ambassadors, holds levees, and dates ukases. How different from, and inferior to, the Winter Palace, recently spoken of in this journal!\* However, though this be his nominal residence, it is not his actual *habitat*; and if one would describe Peterhoff, he need not dilate on this paltry palace, but must rather speak of the many and varied charms which imperial power has bestowed on and developed or created in the country round. The summer quarters of the emperor are not circumscribed by four walls, but comprehend cottages, villas, gardens, fountains, parks, walks, and drives, scattered or extended over many miles. Peterhoff is only a centre point—a district in the home of the autocrat.

If anybody wants to see the ruler of sixty millions of human beings, he is tolerably certain to meet with him in this neighbourhood, almost any day, between the beginning of June and the end of September. The newspapers lately intimated that since the movements of the Baltic fleet he had repaired to it earlier than usual.

It was in the imperial chapel that I first saw him. Not that I was inside, but that he occupied his usual place at one of the north windows. And there he stood, arrayed in the very splendid uniform of his guard, crossing himself and bowing most reverently, while the people outside waited, through the whole service, in the burning sun, with their hats off. He had that day entered on his fifty-seventh year. His bearing was very solemn; but I cannot say as much for his attendants. The chapel would not hold them, and the splendid throng, numbering nearly two hundred men and women in every variety of costume, stood outside the whole time on the flat terrace roof of the adjoining palace, along which the procession had passed. Old Nesselrode was there with his wrinkled visage. Orloff, too, was there. Wooden-legged and armless generals and admirals were there. Young maids of honour and trim lords in waiting were there, who seemed far more disposed to chat with each other than to think about a ceremonial in which they had no particular interest, and could take no part.

After the congregation, inner and outer, had

\* See "Leisure Hour," No. 108.

been dismissed, the empress stepped on to the balcony. Beside her were her fine grandchildren, whom she caressed with all a woman's fondness, for she tenderly loves them. But she looked ill, miserably ill, pale, deathlike; forcing from the spectators many an exclamation of pity, as they looked on that wreck of beauty, and recalled all the circumstances which had so fretted a once fine form. The congratulations of princes awaited, and were with seeming cordiality tendered her, and all that station could give she had in large abundance. Still, there are few English wives and mothers who would exchange lots with the empress Alexandria.

"Bright is the gem on titled brows,  
And precious the array,  
But quiet cots, in rural spots,  
Know greater bliss than they.  
There, seated by the glimmering fire,  
The babe repays its toilworn sire;  
And mild, meek mother smiles to see  
Her heart-buds blooming round her knee.  
Unenvied then the rich man's share;  
'Tis but the dome o'erarching care.  
A princely hall, a splendid train,  
May hide, but cannot heal, a pain."

The dwelling-place of the czar is about a mile and a half from the palace, and is only a cottage, though a beautiful one. But the grounds are very extensive, well laid out, and carefully kept. Here the family live in quiet seclusion, and in as domestic a way as can be attained by people like them. From this retreat the public are properly excluded. Once a year only do they get leave to visit it, and that is on the birthday of its mistress. On such an occasion I was there, and saw thousands wandering without restraint into every nook and corner of the gardens and parks. Here again I saw the emperor, driving about slowly with his wife and sister, eagerly gazed on and respectfully saluted by all.

The liberties taken by everybody that afternoon were amusing. Not content with inspecting the great man outside his house, they seemed resolved to know what he was about within; and, planting themselves on either side the door, they stood staring at him as he talked in the lobby. Still he did not appear to heed them. Such liberties are allowed in Russia. Nicholas would have his people to own him as their father; and just in proportion as he keeps from them the right of thinking for themselves, so does he accord to them the privilege of looking at him. This is his succedaneum for rational freedom. A despot must rule, either by affection or force; and he of Russia—not to speak of higher motives—knows that the former is the stronger yoke of the two. It is well, therefore, to let the people stare. While doing this, they forget more important matters. That evening they saw to the top of their bent; for the empress, the family, and many of the nobles, took tea on an open balcony.

I was walking one afternoon from a friend's house back to the village, and, on rounding a bend in the road, met his majesty with his consort, taking their evening drive. There were two carriages behind them. The emperor himself drove, English fashion. There were no outriders, and no guards of any kind. It was a good, but unostentatious turn-out. In such circumstances, it is ex-

pected that you should stand uncovered till the *cortège* passes, and I did so, receiving quite as good a bow as I gave; for, whatever his faults may be, Nicholas ever demeans himself courteously. Had I not paid him this mark of respect, however, my reasons for withholding it might have been demanded, as I was assured they had been on an occasion when, either from ignorance or rudeness, the customary salute had been omitted.

Once, while in company with some friends, I met him in his own drosky. He was drawn by a beautiful black horse, wore the common infantry casque and gray cloak, and had nobody with or near him but the favourite driver, who seemed far more pompous than his master. He knew us to be English, and eyed us sharply. Indeed every Russian knows an Englishman when he sees him, wherever that may be; and I firmly believe that no foreigners are so much esteemed by all classes, from the czar to the *moujik*, as our own countrymen. And, without partiality, their conduct entitles them to all the esteem in which they are held. All this is of course changed since the war. A gentleman who recently returned from Russia describes the feelings against England and Englishmen as being now intensely bitter.

On the morning of the empress's birthday, already mentioned, there was a grand parade of the *chevalier* guards, her own regiment. She had been unusually feeble, and was not expected out. However, when the men were drawn up in a great hollow square, it was whispered that she would come. A considerable number was assembled, and while I had no objection to the universal politeness, I did miss the heartiness of an English crowd. There were no mischievous boys about, and an utter absence of that class, so abundant with us, whose jokes and self-provoked merriment so beguile the tedium of waiting for a sight. All was flat, very flat, and I grew weary and heavy long ere the emperor arrived. At last he came, and strode into the centre of the square. It was now his turn to wait for the empress. And there he stood, just like a statue, amidst the silence of soldiers and people, apparently not moving a muscle, for nearly a quarter of an hour. Only once did he manifest any impatience, and that was when he turned his head sharply round in the direction from which the carriage of his wife was to come. But he instantly resumed his former attitude, and never moved again until she drove up, and he advanced to receive her with military honours. Then the vehicle, with its feeble burden, was drawn along the sides of the square, and the lady bowed, and the bands played, and the men shouted out their uncouth cry; while in waiting, dutiful and chivalrous, walked the sons and the husband. The sight was soon over, but it was interesting in itself, and doubly so for many reasons which I need not name.

The emperor cares so little for state, that there is a class who would be disappointed at the figure he cuts either at Peterhoff or in the city. In the latter place he wanders through the crowded streets alone; in the country, if accompanied at all, he goes out generally with some member or members of his own family.

I suppose I may now leave crowned heads; let me say something about other objects as worthy



of note. There is the village itself, which, though a showy place, and by no means *very* Russian, is yet Russian enough to be different from an equal number of houses in any other country. The streets are clean; the buildings regular and neat, as done to order. Here and there one sees a dwelling which even makes a little pretension, what with wood-work, stucco, and whitewash. Some of these apportioned to the courtiers are really handsome. But the best structure by far in the place is the "new stables." Its design is castellated gothic, and its size very great. Beside this, the palace is insignificant, and the Alexandria cottage forgotten. It has so many stalls that I do not venture to assign a number.

The carriage-drives, avenues, and shaded walks extend in their many windings for nearly forty miles; and although the country be generally level, and the land poor, art has done everything that could be accomplished. Now the road runs beside an artificial stream; then it is hemmed in by hedges. Now it passes through meadows and rye fields; then it winds, hiding itself in clumps of young trees, and ere long running through the primeval forest. Presently you hear the rush or water, and find a little fall, standing beside which is a lovely Swiss cottage, and close by, an artificial lake, green and grassy to the water's edge. Again the scene changes, and at the end of a long avenue you reach an Italian villa, whose tall tower and fair statues throw their shadows along the lake below. Anon you are at the "empress's island," the most fairy-like creation of all. In every direction there are lovely drives, and walks, and cottages. East and west, north and south, for miles, such pleasures lie open to and invite all comers, Russian or Englishman, prince or peasant. Nobody is excluded, and all respect the indulgence afforded them.

I visited several of these villas, and found them as fair within as without. The pavilion is exquisite; that on the "empress's island" still more so. Choicest sculptures and richest flowers, in either case, make a paradise of the approach.

"Every air was heavy with the sighs  
Of orange groves . . . . .  
And murmurs of low fountains that gush forth  
In the midst of roses."

Inside, perfect order, perfect taste, and softened splendour are at home. Nor are the simpler cottages, though less magnificent, less interesting and elegant. In one of these I found a large and charming collection of English prints, chiefly after Landseer and Herring. The dogs and horses of our great painter seemed special favourites.

The imperial family often visit one or other of these houses on the summer evenings. When they do, the attendants carry to the appointed place the inseparable *samovar*, and prepare tea; a beverage of which immense quantities are consumed in Russia by all classes, and which, in that land, is of a quality and flavour comparatively unknown with us. Why this should be I cannot say; that it is, admits of no question.

These quiet parties so far indicate the affection existing among the members of the Romanoff household. Now I do not imagine that any body, gentle or simple, deserves very much credit for loving his mother or father, his brothers or sisters;

all I say is, that the imperial sons and daughters of Russia are not historically famous for the exercise of such feelings, and it is a pleasant thing to see them improving and love living amidst the jealousies which surround a throne. The poor empress is very fond of such *réunions* of children and grandchildren, for she is a kind woman.

In each of these summer houses there is a room appropriated to the czar, and one of these apartments is a type of all his others. It is plain in the extreme. Two or three green leather chairs, a green leather sofa, a green baize table, an unornamented *secrtoire*, and writing materials, comprise all the furnishing. His room is always the poorest part of his house. His brothers' tastes were the same, extremely simple. While the ladies, and lads, and little folks chat and play below, Nicholas slips upstairs, and often writes for a couple of hours; for he is a thorough man of business, and has enough of it to do.

The lower or "English gardens," near the palace, are specially worthy of a visit. Here, three military bands play every summer night, and there is a grand promenade of all the Peterhoff people, which at this season includes the fashion of St. Petersburg, seasoned with a large sprinkling of visitors, and English or other merchants, with their families, who then rusticate in the neighbourhood. Loitering in this sweet spot of an evening, one forms a very tolerable notion as to the component parts of Russian society, as to its *morale* and tone in everything. You get a notion, too, of the heterogeneous odds and ends which are worked up into the empire, when you see on all sides Germans, Poles, Tartars, Circassians, Cossacks, Fins, Persians, Slavonians, all distinct as ever, and kept together only by the sharp circle of bayonets which surrounds them. There they are, different in face, different in feeling, different in bearing, different in creed, and in many cases different in dress, for the southern people cling to their own beautiful attire. I drank tea one night with an Egyptian, a Persian, an Englishman, a Frenchwoman, and a Russian; and just such a farrago is collected each evening in these gardens. What with grand uniforms, courtly ladies, odd faces, strange costumes, many tongues, beautiful music, and bright flowers, an hour or two passes there very quickly. Nor is the wind-up of the promenade its least interesting part. At the close, the men on guard are drawn out. One of the bands stands beside them. All is still as in a church. Then the glorious evening hymn is played, which, once heard, can never be forgotten; and when the solemn strains have died away, the soldiers and the people uncover, while the officer repeats the Lord's prayer. I dare say these poor fellows know and think very little about it, but to me this closing of a day was ever solemn, most solemn; and, like sir Thomas Browne, I was less disposed to find fault with other men's devotions than to hope that my own were right. Oh that yours and mine, dear reader, may prove as acceptable to God as that dear melody has to my eager ear.

Occasionally the emperor himself visits this animated scene. But his sons or grandsons come oftener. One night the guard turned out in a great hurry, and everybody was on the *qui vive*, but I could see nothing, though I guessed that an

imperial, at least, must be about somewhere. At length I saw by the motion of the people where this last notability was to be found. Off I set in search. Still I saw nothing except a crowd. At length, when I had elbowed my way further in, I found a little boy about four years old, led by a fat officer, and was informed that the poor little fellow was a grand duke. And so he was, for all the people had their hats off, and were staring at him very much as others do at the latest addition to the Zoological Gardens.

On the river side of the palace is a magnificent display of fountains, of which that named "the Samson" is the finest. It is like having a peep at fairy land when one leans over the balustrade on a warm day, and looks down on the many jets which throw their tinted showers into the air, making, as the waters fall again, and rush down the marble steps, "sweet music with the enamel'd stones," and filling earth and atmosphere with freshness. Every one must admire these lovely fountains, and most of all an Englishman, especially if his idea of such things has been formed from a survey of the two squirts in Trafalgar-square. But half the wonders are not seen from the terrace. You must go down below, and wander in the woods. There, in odd corners, you will find little boys standing under perpetual shower-baths; and the "pyramid" of white foam, with its countless pipes; and Adam enveloped in spray, at one end of an avenue, looking wistfully at poor Eve, who is subjected to similar treatment at the other. Then there is the splendid imperial bath, where you are not allowed to bathe, however anxious you may be, and the little mischievous "mushroom" fountain, where, in your innocence, you may get wet through whether you will or not. Indeed there is so much to see, that the most insatiable must be satisfied, and the most critical delighted. Many a sweet hour have I passed in this enchanted place.

Such is Peterhoff in summer. When autumn, a Russian chilly autumn, comes, the emperor goes to Tsarsko Celo, his followers go after him, and the English merchants go back to town. Then the artificial lakes are emptied, the fountains left dry, the bands of music sent to discourse elsewhere, the very flowers taken away, and mud, *moujiks*, and melancholy reign supreme.

"The desolated prospect thrills the soul," and until sunny and peaceful days come back again, we will not go near the summer quarter of the czar.

#### A MAN BEFORE HIS AGE.

In the year 1677 there was published in London a book bearing the following voluminous title: "England's improvement by sea and land. To outdo the Dutch without fighting. To pay debts without moneys. To set at work all the poor of England with the growth of our own lands. To prevent unnecessary suits of law; with the benefit of a voluntary register. Directions where vast quantities of timber are to be had for the building of ships, with the advantage of making the great rivers of England navigable. Rules to prevent fires in London, and other great cities; with directions how the several companies of handicraftsmen in London may always have cheap bread and drink."

The author of this book was Andrew Yarranton, a man of whom mention is now but rarely made, though he was the first Englishman who made the discovery that peace and trade were better than war and plunder, and that national greatness was best secured by the cultivation of a prosperous commerce. He was a shrewd, practical, and enterprising man, closely observant of the facts of his day, especially whenever they had reference to the true policy of the nation as a trading community. That he was a man of sterling natural genius there can be no question, because he foretold, or rather sketched out, the exact course which this country has pursued, and which has led to her present prosperity. Concerning this "remarkable man" the biographers, most of them, are silent; but he tells us himself—"I was apprentice to a linen draper when this king (James II) was born, and continued at the trade some years, but the shop being too narrow and short for my large mind, I took leave of my master, but said nothing. Then I lived a country life for some years; and in the late wars I was a soldier, and sometimes had the honour and misfortune to lodge and dislodge an army. In the year 1652, I entred upon iron works, and plid them several years; and in them times I made it my business to survey the three great rivers of England, and some small ones; and made two navigable and a third almost completed. I next studied the great weakness of the rye-lands, and the surfeit it was then under by reason of their long tillage. I did by practice and theorick find out the reason of its defection, as also of its recovery, and applied the remedy in putting out two books, which so fitted to the countryman's capacity, that he fell on pell-mell; and I hope, and partly know, that great part of Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire, have doubled the value of the land by the husbandry discovered to them; see my two books printed by Mr. Sawbridg on Ludgate Hill, entitled, 'Yarranton's Improvement by Clover,' and there thou mayest be further satisfied. I also for many years served the countreys with seed, and at last gave them the knowledg of getting it with ease and small trouble; and what I have been doing since my book tells you at large."

Thus far Andrew of himself; but we learn further that he was employed by persons high in authority to visit the continent with a view of studying such trades and improvements as might be with advantage introduced into England—that he had been associated with noble lords in improving the inland navigation—consulted with respect to the construction of harbours—and had been appointed commissioner for the examination of land titles. When abroad, he had "pryed into the curious intragues of trade and the thriving politics of our neighbour nations," in order to discover "how and which way the trade of England might be improved and advanced." From his observations in Holland, he had come to the conclusion that we could not beat the Dutch by fighting—and then "by long studying and weighing every part of their condition, and also knowing some of our failings in the advance of trade, and our weak laws conducing thereunto, I did see that all was out of joint; and pursuing the causes thereof, in a small time it appeared to me, that although we

could not beat them with fighting, yet, on the other hand, it was as clear to me that we might beat them without fighting, that being the best and justest way to subdue our enemies.

And how did he propose to set about it? Let us see. Being convinced that England, with her natural advantages, ought to have a good trade, and knowing that she has not—he begins to look out for the means of obtaining it. Trade, up to this time, had everywhere been connected with fighting; but Andrew wants to beat the Dutch without fighting, as the juster way. Like a wise man, as he was, he begins at the beginning, plunging at once to the first principles of commerce. Says he, "All kingdoms and commonwealths in the world that depend upon trades, common honesty is as necessary and needful in them as discipline is in an army; and where is want of common honesty in a kingdom or commonwealth, from thence trade shall depart. For, as the honesty of all governments is, so shall be their riches; and as their honour, honesty and riches are, so will be their trade. On examining into the reasons of the prosperity of the Dutch, he finds it to be based upon two things chiefly—the cheapness of money—and facilities for trade. Money was plentiful with the Dutch because they had a public register of all lands and houses, which they could thus turn into ready money at any time without the necessity of a lawyer: and they had a public bank "making paper go in trade equal with ready money." Their facilities for trade were great, owing to their canals, "cut in all places where it was possible to effect it." With these appliances, to which there was then nothing comparable in England, Andrew calculates that a hundred a year in Holland would do better than a thousand a year in England for trading purposes. In fact, a Dutchman with a hundred a year in land could at once raise a capital of 4000*l.* without incurring expense; whereas, the Englishman of a thousand a year was pretty sure of ruining himself and family if he mortgaged his estate for a like sum—owing to the then rapacity of lawyers and usurers. To do away with such an infamous state of things, he proposes "a general system of banking that should unite the following advantages:—1. Security to the bank for all advances; 2. Security to the capitalist, great or small, for all deposits; and, 3. Facility of advance, based on the registration of freehold land, which would obviate all uncertainty as to title or incumbrance. This registration he would have also extended to houses, and especially to those built after the great fire of London. It is almost needless to observe that this is the very system that has enabled Scotland to assume her present position of commercial importance." "I would have the mistaken world know," says Andrew, "that a bank is as safe and practicable in a kingdom as in a commonwealth, and particularly in an island that is convenient for trade. And the reason why it is so is, because it is a bank of credit and not of cash, as is the chamber of London and the East India Company, whose treasures are abroad and increasing, and only the books in the offices. I say it is impossible to keep a bank from rising in this kingdom, nay, many banks, if we were under a voluntary register."

Having answered objections to the banking

system, he next proposes the growth of flax and the manufacture of linen, the production of iron and its manufacture, and the manufacture of wool. Such, he contended, ought to constitute the great pursuits of industrial England; and it will be noted that, substituting cotton for linen, he foretold as accurately as possible the main features of our manufacturing activities. In order to acquire the necessary skill for the prosecution of the linen manufacture, he advises capitalists to send to Holland and Germany for instructors to teach the people how to work; and promises them for their reward, that they shall save at least two millions of money (an immense sum in those days) from going out of the country to pay for linens. Andrew is angry with those who contend against the manufacture of iron upon nonsensical grounds, and thus appeals to them:—"I pray consider the charge England is now at with the poor, and observe what they now cost the public; but if employed in these two manufactures, what advance by their labour might the public receive! Admit there be in England and Wales a hundred thousand poor people unemployed, and each one costs the public fourpence the day in food, and, if these were employed, they would earn eightpence the day; and so the public, in what might be gained and saved, will advance twelpence the day by each poor person now unemployed. So a hundred thousand persons will be to the benefit of the public, if employed, one million and a half yearly in these two manufactures of iron and linen. . . . But there is something that may be of worse consequence than ordinary, if the iron manufacture be not encouraged. . . . When the greatest part of the iron works are asleep, if there should be occasion for great quantities of guns and bullets, and other sorts of iron commodities, for a present unexpected war, and the Sound happen to be locked up, and so prevent iron coming to us, truly we should then be in a fine case." With regard to the woollen trade, he proposes to improve it by the adoption of the processes which enabled the foreigner to make a handsomer cloth than was made in England, advising that the machinery for so doing should be imported.

Andrew next turns his attention to the means of transit. Says he: "That nothing may be wanting that may conduce to the benefit and encouragement of things manufactured, as in cheap carriage to and fro over England and to the sea at easy rates, I will in the next place show you how the great rivers in England may be made navigable, and thereby make the commodities and goods carried, especially in winter time, for half the rate they now pay." Not content with recommending inland navigation, he devoted his time to it practically: he engaged both as engineer and capitalist in the work. He surveyed the Thames and the Charwell, with a view to a communication between the former river and the Severn. He expended a thousand pounds in making the river Stoure navigable from Sturbridge to Kidderminster. He surveyed the Slome in Ireland—also the Dee, which he would have connected with the Severn—and engaged in many other similar labours. He affirmed prophetically that if his recommendations for the advancement of commerce were followed out in practice, namely,



the establishment of a general banking system, the extension of the iron, linen, and woollen trades, the improvement of inland navigation, and the construction of suitable harbours—the lands of England would rise in value from sixteen years' purchase to thirty years. But he does not look to the extension of trade as the ultimate end: his ultimate end is the welfare of the population, which he regards as identical with cheap meat, drink, and money, "and always certain." Such is his doctrine, and all his schemes have that as their crowning result.

But Andrew, like other men, was fallible, and he made what some of our readers, we presume, will think a mistake: he was the first speculative projector of the system of protection, fancying that he saw in a tax upon goods of foreign manufacture a panacea for all the ills affecting English commerce. We must forgive him this mistake, as the writer, at all events, considers it to have been, for the sake of the soundness of his philosophy in other respects. It is possible, though Andrew's name is little known, that his writings have had their effect, and that much of the legislation affecting trade is due to them. He was a man to whom England and Englishmen stand greatly indebted—a true patriot in the best sense of the word—the founder of politico-economical science—the author of one of the completest practical works ever written. He should be remembered, if only for the phrase, "How to beat the Dutch without fighting, that being the best and justest way to subdue our enemies"—a phrase which the world ought never to forget. When Andrew died, and where he was buried, we cannot tell. The biographical dictionaries on our shelves give us no information concerning him; and we should have known nothing about him at all, had it not been for the publication just now of an able work on the elements of political science, by Patrick Edward Dove, who has appended to his volume an account of Andrew Yarranton, the founder of English political economy, from which account we have gleaned the above particulars, for the gratification, we trust, of our readers.

#### A GLANCE AT NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE.

THE Board of Brokers is a curiosity, and is as well worth a visit as any other menagerie in the city. The principal animals on exhibition are "bulls" and "bears;" but there is a great variety of each genus, and there is no "cry" of any wild beast now in existence that cannot be imitated in a superior manner to the original by some one of the members. While in the board-room, all restraint and dignity is laid aside, and all sorts of tricks are practised by old hands, who, outside, never think of smiling. There are about 150 members, but only 120 are regular attendants. The eldest member is about seventy years of age, and the youngest twenty-five. The initiation fee is four hundred dollars, and the yearly dues, in the shape of fines, are from twenty-five to three hundred dollars more. If not on hand at half-past ten o'clock, when the roll is called, the fine is sixpence; for going to the door, one shilling; for bidding on a stock out of order, two shillings; and so on through the catalogue. Some of the members get fined two or three dollars a day.

The stock list is called over by the president, beginning with government and state stocks, then banks, insurance companies, fancy stocks, railroad stocks, and closing with railroad bonds. Time is given on each stock for bidding. Everything goes along pretty quietly until the fancy stocks are reached, such as Nicaragua, Cumberland, Erie, Hudson River, and Harlem, when there are, occasionally, scenes of noise and confusion perfectly indescribable. Fifty men are yelling at the top of their voices—some wanting to sell and some wanting to buy—some jumping up and some sitting down—all excited—all trying to sell the highest and buy the lowest—making noise enough to confuse your nerves, and rendering it almost impossible to get the sales properly recorded. After a great many raps, and "Come to order, gentlemen!" and "I will fine every gentleman two shillings bidding on that stock!" by the president, order is once more restored. It often happens that one sale is claimed by two persons, and in that case the question is laid before the board to be decided. The decisions are oftentimes unjust, but there is no help for it. If a broker is not popular, he stands a poor chance of getting a decision in his favour. Sometimes in the midst of the greatest excitement, when thousands of dollars are being made and lost, some little incidents will happen that will divert the attention of the whole board, and prevent, for a time, any business being done. One day, when the board was on Erie, and the excitement high, a French gentleman, and a most quiet, well-bred man, got a little excited, and made some petulant remark. In an instant, and with a unanimity that would hardly seem possible, the whole board struck up the "Marseilles Hymn," and sang it through, in spite of all the efforts of the president to prevent it. Sometimes, when on a stock like Crystal Palace, a hen will be heard to cackle, then a Shanghai will crow, ducks will quack, and a general barn-yard concert will take place. A man will go to the other end of the room, and everybody will begin to laugh. He will look round, and see all eyes directed to him. Putting his hand to his back, he finds a card, on which is printed, in large letters, "A fine green turtle." He doesn't get angry, because that does no good; but if he can discover the person who did the deed, he watches his chance to pay him off in like coin.\*

There are some of the finest men in New York in the stock-board, and, as a general thing, the members are men of worth and intelligence. It is difficult to get in, as it only requires three black balls to keep a candidate out, and unless a man can show a pretty clean bill of health there is no chance for him. Young men who have been brought up in Wall-street are sometimes admitted without opposition; but old men, merchants, and broken-down politicians are black-balled right and left.

PERSONS ABSENT FROM GREAT BRITAIN.—The number of persons absent from Great Britain and Ireland on the night of the census was about a quarter of a million, viz., army, navy, marine and merchant service, belonging to Great Britain, 162,490; belonging to Ireland, 49,704; and British subjects resident or travelling in foreign countries, 33,775. The latter were distributed as follows: France, 20,357; Belgium, 3828; Russia, 2783; Two Sicilies, 1414; Turkey, 1235; Sardinian States, 1069; Greece, 1068; Mexico, 755; China, 649; Saxony, 321; Alexandria, 155; Cairo, 85; Persia, 33; Tripoli, 23.—*Cheshire's Results of the Census.*

\* Such puerile and unbusiness-like practices are not, if report speaks true, confined to the Stock Exchange of New York, but are or were wont to be practised on our own.

## Varieties.

ODESSA.—"Hitherto," says Mr. Oliphant, in his work on the "Shores of the Black Sea," "my life had been rendered miserable by repeated allusions to the 'Russian Florence.' Some infatuated Odessans on board the steamer impressed upon me, for two days and nights, that nothing I had seen at Moscow and St. Petersburg could give me even a faint conception of the glories of Odessa, which, according to them, combined in itself the charms of all the capitals of Europe. The statues and the opera were Italian; the boulevards and shops French; the clubs conducted upon English principles; and the hotels unequalled in Europe—the whole forming attractions which may surpass my most sanguine anticipations. It struck me as somewhat singular, notwithstanding, to be told, upon asking what means existed of leaving this enchanting spot, that we should find it necessary to buy a carriage and post, as no diligence had as yet been established. Odessa, probably, is the only town in Europe, containing upwards of a hundred thousand inhabitants, which cannot boast some public means of conveyance other than a post *telega*, which is infinitely more barbarous than a Cape bullock-wagon, and only meant for the conveyance of field-jagers and despatches. It must be admitted that Odessa is very cosmopolitan in its character. Almost every country in Europe has its representative here, and the principal streets are filled with an immense variety of costume. Indeed, Odessa has an air of business and activity about it quite foreign to Russian towns generally; and this is doubtless owing to its rapid growth and mixed population. There is a great deal more liberty enjoyed by the inhabitants than by those of any other town in the empire; and I was struck by the unwonted freedom of smoking and conversation which prevailed among those with whom I mixed. The evident effort made to be as little Russian as possible is a significant comment upon the inconsistency of the inhabitants, who, while they maintain the superior excellence of everything national, seem chiefly desirous of sinking their nationality, and, with that facility of imitation peculiar to the Russian character, seek to assimilate themselves as much as possible to other European nations."

ARABS AND THE BREED OF THEIR HORSES.—Whenever a horse falls into the hands of an Arab, whether by purchase or by plunder, his first thought is how to ascertain its pedigree. If the owner be dismounted in battle, or if he be even about to receive his death-blow from the spear of his enemy, he will frequently employ his last words in describing to its captor the genealogy of his noble mare. After a battle or foray, the tribes who have taken horses from their adversaries will send an envoy to ask their breed; and a person so chosen passes from tent to tent unharmed, hearing from each man, as he eats his bread, the descent and qualities of the animal he may have lost. An instance of this kind is related by Mr. Layard, when on a visit to Howar, the sheikh of the tribe of the Tai. "We found," says Mr. Layard, "the Howar much cast down and vexed by his recent misfortunes. The chiefs of the tribe were with him, in a gloomy consultation over their losses. A Bedouin, wrapped in his ragged cloak, was seated listlessly in the tent. He had been my guest the previous evening at Nimroud, and had announced himself on a mission from the Shammar to the Tai, to learn the breed of the mares which had been taken in a late conflict. His message might appear, to those ignorant of the customs of the Arabs, one of insult and defiance. But he was on a common errand, and although there was blood between the tribes, his person was as sacred as that of an ambassador in any civilized community."

A NEW METHOD OF PAINTING has been discovered and employed by the celebrated Horace Vernet. It consists in mixing the colours with olive oil. When the picture is painted, the back of the canvass is covered with a coating of fuller's earth, which draws the oil through and absorbs it entirely. The painting is thus reduced to the nature of a paste. The fuller's earth is then removed from the canvass, and a coat of linseed oil is applied, always at the back; the colours, in their turn, imbibe this oil, and all the mellowed tones of the old master are obtained.

THE MONKEYS OF GIBRALTAR.—"You would think my account very imperfect indeed," says Arthur Kenyon, in his "Letters from Spain," "if I did not say something of the monkeys which you have so often asked me about. I was fortunate in seeing them very soon after I arrived, for, except when the wind blows from the east, they do not often show themselves on the same side the rock as the town is situated, and are therefore not seen for long intervals. But I happened to be driving with my friends the H.'s, when, suddenly, a little girl, who was sitting in the carriage, exclaimed, with great glee, 'There are the monkeys!' and, on looking, I observed, a good distance off, on the heights above us, some objects which at first I thought were dogs, but I soon perceived, from the agility with which they sprang from rock to rock, that they were indeed the animals I so much wished to see. Gibraltar is, I believe, the only place in Europe where these monkeys are to be found, nor are they very numerous there, but are preserved with great care, nobody being allowed to kill or catch them. They are of the species called the Barbary Ape (*Simia Inuus*), and are about three or four feet in length, of a greenish-brown colour. The face is not very unlike that of a dog, but they are extremely ugly, and have huge pouches in their cheeks, where they place their food until they want to eat it. They go about in one large troop, and seem to be under the direction of a venerable old chief with a long white beard, who in Gibraltar is known by the name of the 'Town Major.' Usually they inhabit the highest part of the rock, and feed, I think I was told, on the palmetto plant; but sometimes, when the oranges are ripe, they come down to rob the gardens, and then they are often fierce and mischievous. Two ladies told me that, shortly after they came to Gibraltar, they returned home one day highly indignant at the bad manners of the little boys of the town, who, they said, had been throwing stones at them from behind the trees in the Alameda. Some one suggested they must be mistaken; but no, they were quite positive of it; for they had distinctly heard the naughty little urchins laughing and whispering, although they could not see them. The next day the same thing happened, and they determined, if possible, to discover the delinquents. They ran in among the trees, and then, to their astonishment, saw several of the monkeys sitting on the branches, jabbering away and making the most hideous grimaces; so the ladies thought it best to retire at once, which they did, followed by a fresh shower of stones. The female monkeys carry their young ones in their arms as women do their children, and Mrs. H. told me she once saw one of them performing the morning toilet of her offspring, which she described as being painfully like a similar operation among human beings; for the mother, while she smoothed down the hair of her bantling, kissed and caressed it as long as it was good, but when the thing became restless, boxed its ears soundly. It is a curious fact that the lifeless bodies or skeletons of the monkeys are never found, and it is not known what they do with their dead; some saying they throw them into the sea, and others that they carry them across to Barbary, through the subterranean passage that is supposed to exist under the straits."

A LITERARY DOG.—There is a dog in Liverpool that visits all the newspaper offices every day. He generally honours our establishment with his first visit. For some hour or hour and a half he reclines on the flags on one side of the door-way, eyeing the passers-by and each person who enters. Then he rises, and proceeds to the next adjoining office, the "Standard," where, having gone through the same observance, he repairs to the "Mercury," and again renews his apparent penance. Thence he goes to the "Albion," the "Journal," and the "Times," at each of which places he similarly spends about the same space of time, which completes his daily gyrations. It is surmised that he is the dog of some defunct newsmen.—*Liverpool Mercury*.

BRITISH SUBJECTS IN RUSSIA.—The number of British subjects resident or travelling in Russia on the night of the recent census of Great Britain was 2783.—*Cheshire's Results of the Census*.